

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of image communications with E-mail,
comprising the steps of:

5 receiving E-mail that contains image information and
includes a request for a receipt acknowledgement, said E-
mail being sent from a mail sender;

decoding said image information contained in said E-
mail;

10 creating a return mail for acknowledging a receipt of
said electronic mail;

attaching a predetermined page of said image
information to said return mail; and

transmitting said return mail back to said mail
15 sender as a response to said request.

2. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said
predetermined page is a first page of said image
information contained in said received E-mail.

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3. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said
attaching step attaches said E-mail as it is to said return
mail when said decoding step cannot decode said image
information.

4. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said
request included in said E-mail requests an MDN, said
receiving step receives said E-mail according to a POP3 or
an IMAP4 procedure, and said transmitting step transmits
5 said return mail according to an SMTP procedure.

5. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said
request included in said E-mail requests a DSN, said
receiving step receives said E-mail according to an SMTP
10 procedure, and said transmitting step transmits said return
mail according to an SMTP procedure.

6. A method as defined in Claim 1, further
comprising a step of embedding a number of said
15 predetermined page into a first part of said return mail.

7. A method as defined in Claim 1, further
comprising a step of embedding a number of said
predetermined page into a second part of said return mail.

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8. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said
predetermined page of said image information attached to
said return mail corresponds to a number of a page
designated by said request included in said E-mail.

9. A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said predetermined page of said image information attached to said return mail corresponds to a number of a page designated by said mail sender through an SMTP procedure
5 for said E-mail.

10. A method of image communications with E-mail, comprising the steps of:

transmitting E-mail to a mail recipient, said E-mail
10 containing image information and including a request for a receipt acknowledgement;

receiving a return mail from said mail recipient for acknowledging a receipt of said E-mail, said return mail including a predetermined page of said image information
15 contained in said E-mail; and

outputting a status report indicating contents of said return mail and including an image of said predetermined page included in said image information.

20 11. A method as defined in Claim 10, wherein said predetermined page is a first page of said image information contained in said E-mail.

12. A method as defined in Claim 10, wherein said
return mail received by said receiving step includes said
image information included in said E-mail without being
decoded when said image information cannot be decoded by
5 said mail recipient.

13. A method as defined in Claim 10, wherein said
request included in said E-mail requests an MDN, said
transmitting step transmits said E-mail according to an
10 SMTP procedure, and said receiving step receives said
return mail according to a POP3 or an IMAP4 procedure.

14. A method as defined in Claim 10, wherein said
request included in said E-mail requests a DSN, said
15 transmitting step transmits said E-mail according to an
SMTP procedure, and said receiving step receives said
return mail according to an SMTP procedure.

15. A method as defined in Claim 10, wherein a
20 first part of said return mail received by said receiving
step is embedded with a number of said predetermined page
attached to said return mail.

16. A method as defined in Claim 10, wherein a second part of said return mail received by said receiving step is embedded with a number of said predetermined page attached to said return mail.

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17. A method as defined in Claim 10, wherein said E-mail includes page information designating a number of a page to be attached to said return mail, and said predetermined page of said image information attached to said return mail accordingly corresponds to said page information.

18. A method as defined in Claim 10, further comprising a step for designating a number of a page to be attached to said return mail through an SMTP procedure for said E-mail, wherein said predetermined page of said image information attached to said return mail accordingly corresponds to said number of a page designated by said designating step.

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19. A data terminal coupled to at least a local area network, comprising:

a communications mechanism arranged and configured to receive E-mail that contains image information and includes

a request for a receipt acknowledgement, said E-mail being sent from a mail sender through said local area network;

a decoder decoding said image information contained in said E-mail; and

5 a controller arranged and configured to create a return mail for acknowledging a receipt of said electronic mail, to attach a predetermined page of said image information to said return mail, and to cause said communications mechanism to transmit said return mail back
10 to said mail sender as a response to said request.

20. A data terminal as defined in Claim 19, wherein said predetermined page is a first page of said image information contained in said received E-mail.

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21. A data terminal as defined in Claim 19, wherein said controller attaches said E-mail as it is to said return mail when said decoder cannot decode said image information.

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22. A data terminal as defined in Claim 19, wherein said request included in said E-mail requests an MDN, said communications mechanism receives said E-mail according to a POP3 or an IMAP4 procedure, and said controller causes

said communications mechanism to transmit said return mail according to an SMTP procedure.

23. A data terminal as defined in Claim 19, wherein
5 said request included in said E-mail requests a DSN, said communications mechanism receives said E-mail according to an SMTP procedure, and said controller causes said communications mechanism to transmit said return mail according to an SMTP procedure.

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24. A data terminal as defined in Claim 19, wherein said controller embeds a number of said predetermined page into a first part of said return mail.

15 25. A data terminal as defined in Claim 19, wherein said controller embeds a number of said predetermined page into a second part of said return mail.

26. A data terminal as defined in Claim 19, wherein
20 said predetermined page of said image information attached to said return mail corresponds to a number of a page designated by said request included in said E-mail.

27. A data terminal as defined in Claim 19, wherein
said predetermined page of said image information attached
to said return mail corresponds to a number of a page
designated by said mail sender through an SMTP procedure
5 for said E-mail.

28. A data terminal coupled to a local area
network, comprising:

a communications mechanism arranged and configured to
10 transmit E-mail to a mail recipient and to receive a return
mail from said mail recipient for acknowledging a receipt
of said E-mail, said E-mail containing image information
and including a request for a receipt acknowledgement, and
said return mail including a predetermined page of said
15 image information contained in said E-mail;

an outputting mechanism arranged and configured to
output information; and

a controller arranged and configured to create said
E-mail, and to retrieve said predetermined page and to
20 cause said outputting mechanism to output a status report
indicating contents of said return mail and an image of
said retrieved predetermined page when said communications
mechanism receives said return mail.

29. A data terminal as defined in Claim 28, wherein said predetermined page is a first page of said image information contained in said E-mail.

5 30. A data terminal as defined in Claim 28, wherein said return mail includes said image information included in said E-mail without being decoded when said image information cannot be decoded by said mail recipient.

10 31. A data terminal as defined in Claim 28, wherein said request included in said E-mail requests an MDN, and said communications mechanism transmits said E-mail according to an SMTP procedure and receives said return mail according to a POP3 or an IMAP4 procedure.

15 32. A data terminal as defined in Claim 28, wherein said request included in said E-mail requests a DSN, and said communications mechanism transmits said E-mail according to an SMTP procedure and receives said return
20 mail according to an SMTP procedure.

33. A data terminal as defined in Claim 28, wherein a first part of said return mail received by said communications mechanism is embedded with a number of said

predetermined page attached to said return mail.

34. A data terminal as defined in Claim 28, wherein
a second part of said return mail received by said
5 communications mechanism is embedded with a number of said
predetermined page attached to said return mail.

35. A data terminal as defined in Claim 28, wherein
said E-mail includes page information designating a number
10 of a page to be attached to said return mail, and said
predetermined page of said image information attached to
said return mail accordingly corresponds to said page
information.

36. A data terminal as defined in Claim 28, wherein
when said controller creates said E-mail said controller
designates a number of a page to be attached to said return
mail through an SMTP procedure for said E-mail, wherein
said predetermined page of said image information attached
20 to said return mail accordingly corresponds to said number
of a page designated by said controller.

37. A data terminal coupled to at least a local
area network, comprising:

communicating means for receiving E-mail that contains image information and includes a request for a receipt acknowledgement, said E-mail being sent from a mail sender through said local area network;

5 decoding means for decoding said image information contained in said E-mail; and

controlling means for creating a return mail for acknowledging a receipt of said electronic mail, attaching a predetermined page of said image information to said
10 return mail, and causing said communicating means to transmit said return mail back to said mail sender as a response to said request.

38. A data terminal as defined in Claim 37, wherein
15 said predetermined page is a first page of said image information contained in said received E-mail.

39. A data terminal as defined in Claim 37, wherein
said controlling means attaches said E-mail as it is to
20 said return mail when said decoding means cannot decode said image information.

40. A data terminal as defined in Claim 37, wherein
said request included in said E-mail requests an MDN, said

communicating means receives said E-mail according to a POP3 or an IMAP4 procedure, and said controlling means causes said communicating means to transmit said return mail according to an SMTP procedure.

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41. A data terminal as defined in Claim 37, wherein said request included in said E-mail requests a DSN, said communicating means receives said E-mail according to an SMTP procedure, and said controlling means causes said communicating means to transmit said return mail according to an SMTP procedure.

42. A data terminal as defined in Claim 37, wherein said controlling means embeds a number of said predetermined page into a first part of said return mail.

43. A data terminal as defined in Claim 37, wherein said controlling means embeds a number of said predetermined page into a second part of said return mail.

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44. A data terminal as defined in Claim 37, wherein said predetermined page of said image information attached to said return mail corresponds to a number of a page designated by said request included in said E-mail.

45. A data terminal as defined in Claim 37, wherein
said predetermined page of said image information attached
to said return mail corresponds to a number of a page
designated by said mail sender through an SMTP procedure
5 for said E-mail.

46. A data terminal coupled to a local area
network, comprising:

communicating means for transmitting E-mail to a mail
10 recipient and receiving a return mail from said mail
recipient for acknowledging a receipt of said E-mail, said
E-mail containing image information and including a request
for a receipt acknowledgement, and said return mail
including a predetermined page of said image information
15 contained in said E-mail;

outputting means for outputting information; and

controlling means for creating said E-mail, and when
said communicating means receives said return mail, said
controlling means being arranged and configured to retrieve
20 said predetermined page and to cause said outputting means
to output a status report indicating contents of said
return mail and an image of said retrieved predetermined
page.

47. A data terminal as defined in Claim 46, wherein said predetermined page is a first page of said image information contained in said E-mail.

5 48. A data terminal as defined in Claim 46, wherein said return mail includes said image information included in said E-mail without being decoded when said image information cannot be decoded by said mail recipient.

10 49. A data terminal as defined in Claim 46, wherein said request included in said E-mail requests an MDN, and said communicating means transmits said E-mail according to an SMTP procedure and receives said return mail according to a POP3 or an IMAP4 procedure.

15 50. A data terminal as defined in Claim 46, wherein said request included in said E-mail requests a DSN, and said communicating means transmits said E-mail according to an SMTP procedure and receives said return mail according
20 to an SMTP procedure.

51. A data terminal as defined in Claim 46, wherein a first part of said return mail received by said communicating means is embedded with a number of said

predetermined page attached to said return mail.

52. A data terminal as defined in Claim 46, wherein
a second part of said return mail received by said
5 communicating means is embedded with a number of said
predetermined page attached to said return mail.

53. A data terminal as defined in Claim 46, wherein
said E-mail includes page information designating a number
10 of a page to be attached to said return mail, and said
predetermined page of said image information attached to
said return mail accordingly corresponds to said page
information.

54. A data terminal as defined in Claim 46, wherein
15 when said controlling means creates said E-mail said
controlling means designates a number of a page to be
attached to said return mail through an SMTP procedure for
said E-mail, wherein said predetermined page of said image
20 information attached to said return mail accordingly
corresponds to said number of a page designated by said
controlling means.

55. An e-mail system comprising:

a sending facility coupled with a

communications network to which a number of
receiving facilities are also coupled;

said sending facility being configured to

assemble an e-mail message that contains
non-image information including a request
for an acknowledgment, and image
information, and to transmit the
assembled e-mail message to a selected
one of said receiving facilities;

said sending facility being further configured

to receive a response e-mail message from
said selected receiving facility, said
response e-mail message containing both
non-image information and image
information corresponding to at least at
part of the image information sent to the
receiving facility from the sending
facility; and

an output system coupled to said sending

facility and responsive to said response
e-mail message to automatically assemble
and provide a visual output of a status
report related to said response e-mail
message, said visual output corresponding
to at least a part of the image
information included in the response e-
mail message.

56. An e-mail system comprising:
a receiving facility coupled with a
communications network to which a sending
facility is also coupled;
5 said receiving facility being configured to
receive an incoming e-mail message over
said network from said sending facility,
said received e-mail message containing a
request for an acknowledgment and both
10 non-image information and image
information;
said receiving facility being further
configured to automatically assemble a
response e-mail message that contains
15 both non-image information and image
information corresponding to at least a
selected part of the image information
included in the received e-mail message;
and
20 an output system coupled to said receiving
facility and configured to automatically
send said response e-mail message to said
sending facility over said network.

25 57. An e-mail system as in claim 56 in which said
receiving facility includes a decoding system
configured to decode said image information
included in the incoming message and to include
in said response e-mail message only image
30 information corresponding to a selected page of
the image information.

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58. An e-mail system as in claim 56 in which said
receiving facility includes a decoding system
configured to attempt to decode said image
information included in said incoming message
and, in case of a failure to decode, to include
in said response e-mail image information
corresponding to all of the image information
received at said receiving facility.